REMARKS

In the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner objected to Claims 1, 6, 11 and 16 because of some informalities. Claims 1, 6, 11 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Small et al. in view of Fairchild et al.

In response to the objection to the claims, Applicants have amended Claims 1, 6, 11 and 16 to better claim the invention. For the reasons stated more fully below, Applicants submit that the claims, as presently drafted, are allowable over the applied references. Hence, reconsideration, allowance and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

As stated in the Response to the previous Office Action and in the SPECIFICATION, depending on circumstances and environments (e.g., work, home) in which a computer system (e.g., a laptop) is being used, some icons, background image, screen saver image etc. may not be appropriate for display. In such cases, a user may have to delete the offending items from the desktop or replace them with others. However, in some other environments (e.g., away from work or away from home) the user may want these items displayed. Presently, a user can only have one desktop be automatically displayed whenever a computer system is turned on. The present invention, however, allows different desktops to be displayed based on the network address of the computer system.

Particularly, the invention may be designed or a user may specify ahead of time that if a computer system is behind a company's firewall (e.g., is part of a company's Intranet) a particular desktop may be displayed. If not, a different desktop may be displayed. Whenever, the computer system is turned on, it will check to see whether it is within the company's Intranet by comparing its network address which is made of an address assigned to a network and an address assigned to the computer system itself with a stored network address, which is also made of an address assigned to a network (network in this case is the network of the company) and an address assigned to a computer system. Based on the result of the comparison, an appropriate desktop may be used.

The invention is set forth in claims of varying scopes of which Claim 1 is illustrative.

> 1. A method of using a desktop upon turning on a computer system, the computer system having a network address, the network address being made partly of a number assigned to a network and partly of a number assigned to the computer system, the method comprising the steps of:
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> determining whether more than one desktop exist on the computer system; and
>
> selecting one of the desktops to use if more than one exist, ***said selecting step includes the step of comparing the number assigned to the network of the network address of the computer system with a number assigned to a network of a stored network address and the step of using the selected desktop if the two***

> ***compared numbers are the same.*** (Emphasis added.)

The Examiner conceded that Small et al. do not teach the use of network addresses to select a desktop. Nonetheless, the Examiner continued to reject the claims. As support for the rejection, the Examiner stated that Fairchild et al. teach desktop management of devices on a network using beacons to determine connections wherein the desktop management system determines what part of the network it is connected to based on the network address of the device and the server address. Thus, the Examiner concluded, it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art to combine the teachings of Small et al. with those of Fairchild et al. to arrive at the invention since determining which part of the network the user is connected to is an alternate means for Small et al.'s use of beacons to determine location. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Fairchild et al. purport to teach an automatic state consolidation for network participating devices. According to Fairchild et al., when a network of devices is being managed, one of a plurality of traditional network discovery methods is used. The traditional network discoveries include (1) explicit discovery, where the network addresses of the devices being managed are explicitly specified to the management software; (2) Internet Protocol (IP) pinging, where the management software enumerates a range of network addresses and individually pings the addresses to detect active devices; and (3) router tables is used, where the management

software collects potential device addresses from network router tables.

All three of the traditional network discovery methods have drawbacks. For example, in the case of explicit discovery, it is necessary to learn the address of each device and enter the value in the management software. This is a time consuming process in a network of any substantive size. Additionally, since many devices are dynamically assigned network addresses, the explicitly entered information may become invalid with the passage of time.

IP pinging is time consuming, consumes network bandwidth, and may produce inconclusive results. Additionally, when the presence of the device is detected, no information as to what sort of device has been detected is available.

The use of router tables is also subject to similar deficiencies as IP pinging.

Further, in all of these traditional cases, the fact that the address of a device can be dynamically changed is an ongoing problem. Once a device's address is changed, the management software is no longer able to communicate with it. These techniques rely on low level network protocols, and changes in network infrastructure technology often renders these traditional methods less effective or even non-effective.

Thus, Fairchild et al. propose to use one or more filter devices, such as routers or the like, to separate a network into subnets and to have devices in each subnet

send status information (based on certain criteria) to a master device in the subnet. The filter devices ensure that status information sent by a device on a particular subnet only goes to other devices on that same subnet rather than to all the devices in the network (i.e., devices on another subnet will not receive the status information). Periodically, one of the devices on a subnet (one that has been designated as a master device) will send the status information of all the devices in that subnet to the management system.

The devices on a subnet send their status information to each other by broadcasting packets of data representing their status information on the subnet. Each broadcast packet is formulated is referred to as a beacon packet (see col. 13, line 39 to col. 14, line 8).

According to Fairchild et al., one device may belong to more than one subnet if it has more than one NIC (network interface card). Each NIC will have an IP address. In order to ensure that a device that belongs to more than one subnet receives status info from devices on all the subnets to which it belongs, the IP addresses of the devices are used. In such cases, the IP addresses, which are of 32 bits according to TCP/IP, are divided into high-order 24 bits which identify a subnet and a lower-order octet that identifies the device. Thus, using standard dotted quad notation, a device with an IP address of 132.132.132.25 is in the same network as a device with an IP address of 132.132.132.200 whereas a device with an IP address of 132.132.133.25 is in a different subnet.

Thus, Fairchild et al. do not teach the use of beacon packets to determine connection as the Examiner stated. Rather, Fairchild et al. teach the use of the beacon packets to send status information. Small et al. on the other hand, use beacons determine location.

Consequently, Applicants fail to see why one skilled in the art would be motivated to combine the teachings of Small et al. with those of Fairchild et al. Specifically, Small et al. advocate the use of beacons to determine one's location on a network whereas Fairchild et al. advocate the use of network address comparisons to accomplish the same goal. Why then would one combine the two teachings?

Consequently, Claim 1 should be allowable. Independent Claims 6, 11 and 16, which all incorporate the above-emboldened-italicized limitations in the above-reproduced claim 1, also be allowable. Therefore, Applicants once more respectfully request reconsideration, allowance and passage to issue of the claims in the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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